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Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme 2017

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The document provides a summary of the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme 2017. The report is based on the information in an online reporting system, the Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System (IMDIS), used within the United Nations secretariat.

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I. Description of the main accomplishments in 2017

A. Coordination of international statistical work in the UNECE region

1. In 2017, 26 international organizations contributed to the statistical work of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), which coordinates statistical activities in the UNECE region.

2. International statistical work was reviewed in depth in three statistical areas with the purpose of improving inter-agency coordination and eliminating overlaps and gaps in statistical activities in the UNECE region. The three reviews addressed the following topics: (i) data integration; (ii) gaps in gender statistics and (iii) emerging issues in communication.

3. The High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics project on data integration continued until end 2017. In addition, as a result of the in-depth reviews, the Bureau decided to launch follow-up work on gender statistics, and will review the terms of reference in February 2018. The emerging issues in communication will be discussed further in the related CES seminar in June 2018. Based on the outcomes, the Bureau will agree on further work at its October 2018 meeting.

B. Methodological work

4. In 2017, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and its Bureau endorsed six methodological guidelines, namely on (i) *Poverty Measurement*; (ii) *Road Map on Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals*; (iii) *Initial Set of Climate Change-related Indicators*; (iv) *Value of Official Statistics*; (v) *Valuing Unpaid Household Work*; and (vi) *Communicating Population Projections*. UNECE developed these in cooperation with countries and partner organizations: the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT), European Free Trade Organization (EFTA), International Labour Organization (ILO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Population Division, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), World Health Organization and World Bank.

5. As a follow-up to the development of the initial set of climate change-related indicators, 17 statistical offices pilot tested them, and the set of indicators will be used as a basis of developing global climate change indicators. The Bureau launched further work to refine the initial set of indicators based on the outcomes of the pilot testing and develop methodologies and data sources for the indicators. As a follow-up to endorsing the *Recommendations on the Value of Official Statistics*, UNECE updated the wiki on good practices with the innovative content of the Workshop on Statistical Data Dissemination and Communication. To pursue the recommendation for further work of the *Guidelines on Poverty Measurement*, the CES Bureau established a new Task Force to develop poverty data disaggregation in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

6. In addition, six draft CES guidelines and recommendations were prepared in 2017 for discussion by the Conference in 2018, namely on *Guidance on data integration for measuring migration*, *Measuring international labour mobility*, *Guidelines on the use of registers and administrative data for population and housing censuses*, *Guidelines on the statistical infrastructure required to support the production of business demography and*

entrepreneurship statistics, *Guidance on common elements of statistical legislation* and *Recommendations with good practices in producing leading, composite and sentiment indicators, interim report*. The publications are presented in more detail in Section IIA.

7. In 2017, UNECE carried out methodological work by drafting new guidelines and collecting good practices in 28 out of 55 statistical areas of the Classification of International Statistical Activities. The number of statistical areas in which UNECE works cannot be further expanded. To support the 2030 Agenda, UNECE needs to focus its methodological work on measuring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in collaboration with key partners. Therefore, the related indicator of achievement has been revised for the biennium 2018-2019 to measure the number of areas in which UNECE provides methodological support for measuring progress towards SDGs.

C. Capacity building

8. In 2017, UNECE carried out 9 regional and 10 national training workshops for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia with the support of the regular budget, the budget for technical cooperation, funding from the United Nations Development Account and external funding sources. In addition, a number of advisory missions were conducted at the request of countries. With these activities, UNECE supported countries' capacity to develop statistical systems for monitoring progress towards SDGs, to provide gender-sensitive indicators, and to fill gaps identified in Global Assessments of national statistical systems. As indicated by surveys, 87 per cent of experts who took part in UNECE training workshops in 2017 considered the training to be of high quality and useful for their work.

9. These activities contributed to progress in areas identified for improvement in Global Assessments of national statistical systems. Global Assessments analyze progress of countries with developing statistical systems in implementing international standards and compliance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. They are carried out at countries' request jointly with Eurostat and EFTA. In 2017, the Global Assessments of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan were finalized, and the Global Assessment of Moldova was launched. Furthermore, Belarus and Georgia asked for Global Assessments of their national statistical systems. In addition, six UNECE member States developed a national strategy for sustainable development of statistics in line with recommendations provided in Global Assessments.

10. To address member States' requests for assistance in implementing the recommendations, UNECE is carrying out two United Nations Development Account (UNDA) projects[1] to strengthen the capacity of countries for the sustainable development of statistics in the sub-region. UNECE also carries out some externally funded projects, for instance a project funded by the World Bank to "enhance coherence and integration of economic and social statistics in support of the implementation of 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA)". In addition, UNECE is carrying out work on population and housing censuses with the support of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and a project to develop poverty measurement with the support of the Russian Federation. A number of workshops were organized in 2017 within the scope of these projects.

11. UNECE continued its involvement in activities to support the implementation of the *Generic Law on Official Statistics*, developed by UNECE jointly with EFTA and Eurostat as

[1] The title of the UNDA 9th tranche project is "Supporting the implementation of the global assessment recommendations in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia", and the title of the UNDA 10th tranche project is "Programme on Statistics and Data" intended in support of SDGs.

a key outcome of the UNDA 9th tranche project. The model provides a strong reference for developing a solid legal basis for the functioning of national statistical systems and the production of high quality official statistics. In 2017, Moldova was the first country to revise its national statistical law using the Generic Law as a basis. The Generic Law was published as an electronic and printed publication in 2017.

D. UNECE statistical database

12. Progress has been made in the availability of high quality macroeconomic, social and demographic statistics in the UNECE statistical database. The country overview tables were among the most actively used data along with gender and economic statistics.

13. In 2016-2017, downloads of statistical data from the UNECE statistical database grew by an estimated 32 per cent compared to 2014-2015. The share of downloads via mobile devices has also increased. The total downloads reached over 650,000 by the end of 2017.

14. The user satisfaction surveys conducted in 2017 showed that 88 per cent of users were satisfied with the quality, coverage and timeliness of data. Improvements made in the timeliness and reliability of data along with the availability of quick statistics, maps, graphs and country rankings have attracted new users.

II. Outputs prepared in 2017

A. Manuals, guidelines, recommendations, compilations of best practices

15. The Conference of European Statisticians and its Bureau endorsed the following guidelines and recommendations in 2017:

- *Guide on poverty measurement* provides recommendations for improving the international comparability and availability of statistics on poverty and the related metadata. These recommendations are important in light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its principle of leaving no one behind;
- *Road map on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals* presents a strategy on how to provide statistics for SDGs and guides member States in developing the national capacity in this area;
- *Initial set of key climate change-related indicators* defines an internationally comparable set of indicators on climate change that can be derived largely from existing statistical systems and that are aligned with the indicators for the measurement of SDGs, the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction and the Paris Agreement on climate change;
- *Value of official statistics* publication provides recommendations on promoting, communicating and measuring the value of official statistics to allow for better understanding and communication of this value to society. The Task Force also created a platform for the exchange of good practices with over 200 cases highlighting how to enhance the value of official statistics;
- *Guide on valuing unpaid household service work* proposes concepts and definitions, measurement approaches and valuation techniques of unpaid household service work, which is an emerging area for the statistical community and an important area for analysis of gender and inequality issues;

- *Recommendations on communicating population projections* share current good practices on communicating population projections and propose mechanisms for collecting and disseminating metadata on national and international population projections.

16. UNECE Task Forces are currently working to finalize the following six statistical guidelines for submission to the 2018 CES plenary session for endorsement:

- *Guidance on data integration for measuring migration* will describe good practices and provide practical guidance for integrating different data sources to improve the measurement of immigration, emigration and net migration;
- *Measuring international labour mobility* will focus on the compilation of labour mobility statistics and provide practical guidance on the definitions, methods and data sources that can be used to measure labour mobility. They will also include country case studies on the measurement of labour mobility;
- *Guidelines on the use of registers and administrative data for population and housing censuses* will cover operational, practical, technical and legal aspects of using multiple data sources for censuses, in particular register and administrative data. They will also provide methods for measuring coverage and quality of the various sources and present good practices in the area;
- *Guidelines on the statistical infrastructure required to support the production of business demography and entrepreneurship statistics* will provide definitions and guidance on the compilation of key business demography indicators and linking statistical business registers with information from other sources to produce entrepreneurship indicators;
- *Guidance on common elements of statistical legislation* will define common elements and requirements for modern legal frameworks to guarantee flexibility, independence, integrity and accountability of national statistical systems and high quality of official statistics;
- *Recommendations with good practices for producing leading, composite and sentiment indicators* will be submitted to the CES plenary session for discussion as an interim report. The Recommendations will include a taxonomy of these indicators with definitions, compilation methods and uses. The document will also suggest strategies, especially on communication, that could be useful in dealing with the different types of indicators.

17. All publications, including the above manuals, guidelines, recommendations and compilations of best practices, will be made available at the following address: http://www.unece.org/statistics/publications.html.

B. UNECE statistical database

18. The statistical database is available at: w3.unece.org/PXWeb/en, providing:

- Macroeconomic data (national accounts main aggregates, industrial production, labour force, wages, price indices, purchasing power parities, exchange rates, and globalization indicators);
- Social and demographic data with gender breakdown (population, fertility, families and households, work and the economy, education, public life and decision making, health and mortality, crime and violence, science and ICT, and life balance);
- Transport and forestry statistics provided by other UNECE Divisions;

- Clearinghouse for migration statistics for the CIS countries.
- Country overview tables and tables with a country ranking and country profiles, charts and maps.

C. Websites and wikis maintained by the UNECE Statistical Division

19. The UNECE Statistical Division's website (www.unece.org/stats) provides information about the Division's work and includes links to final products and other materials. These links include:

- Links to official statistical organizations: www.unece.org/stats/links.html
- Statistical work related to SDGs: www.unece.org/stats/sde/sdg.html
- Statistical database website: w3.unece.org/PXWeb/en
- Gender statistics website with multimedia training videos: www.unece.org/stats/gender.html
- Library of training materials on statistics: www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/train

20. In addition to the website, the Statistical Division maintains a collaborative Wiki platform for experts to communicate with one another and to share knowledge and tools. The Statistical Division has currently 101 wiki spaces (including 60 public wikis and 41 restricted access wikis with 1792 registered users). The Wikis and knowledge bases on different subjects can be found at: https://statswiki.unece.org

III. List of meetings organized in 2017

21. Documents for public meetings are available at: www.unece.org/statistics/meetings-and-events.html. In 2017, the UNECE Statistical Division organized 44 meetings presented in the Annex. This includes 34 regional or sub-regional events, and 10 national events.

Annex I.

List of meetings held from January to December 2017

Jointly with	*Meeting (venue)*	*Date*	*X for capacity building*
	CES Bureau meeting (Geneva, Switzerland)	14-15 February 2017	
	Expert Meeting on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals (Geneva, Switzerland)	10-12 April 2017	
UNSD	Workshop on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals (Geneva, Switzerland)	12-13 April 2017	X
	High-level seminar on the process-oriented approach to statistical production (Seoul, Korea)	19-21 April 2017	
	Work Session on statistical data editing (The Hague, Netherlands)	24-26 April 2017	
UN Environment	Environment statistics and SDGs - national training workshop (Astana, Kazakhstan)	25-28 April 2017	X
	National workshop on disseminating, communicating and using gender statistics (Astana, Kazakhstan)	29-31 May 2017	X
Eurostat, OECD	16th session of the meeting of the Group of Experts on National Accounts (Geneva, Switzerland)	31 May – 2 June 2017	
	65th plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (Geneva, Switzerland)	19-21 (am) June 2017	
	Seminar on the implementation of the UNECE Road Map for SDGs in EECCA countries (Geneva, Switzerland)	21 (pm) June 2017	X
	Workshop on statistical data dissemination and communication (Geneva, Switzerland)	28-30 June 2017	
UNECE Env. Progr.	13th Joint Task Force on environmental statistics and indicators (Geneva, Switzerland)	29-30 June 2017	
Eurostat	Workshop on implementing the Common Statistical Production Architecture (Wiesbaden, Germany)	3-5 July 2017	
	Seminar on the Role of National Statistical Offices in the production of leading, composite and sentiment indicators (Geneva, Switzerland)	6-7 July 2017	
Eurostat	Work Session on statistical data confidentiality (Skopje, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)	20-22 September 2017	
	Workshop on harmonisation of poverty statistics (Budva, Montenegro)	25 September 2017	X
	Expert meeting on measuring poverty and inequality (Budva, Montenegro)	26-27 September 2017	
Eurostat, OECD EFTA	Meeting of the Group of Experts on Business Registers (Paris, France)	27-29 September 2017	
CIS-STAT, UNFPA	Workshop on Population and Housing Censuses (Geneva, Switzerland)	2-3 October 2017	X
Eurostat	Meeting of the Group of Experts on Population and Housing Censuses (Geneva, Switzerland)	4-6 October 2017	
UNECE	14th Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and	2-3 (am) October 2017	

Env. Progr.	Indicators (Rome, Italy)		
	Expert Forum on climate change-related statistics (Rome, Italy)	3 (am) - 5 October 2017	
EFTA, ECB	Workshop on consistency between National Accounts and Balance of Payments Statistics (Minsk, Belarus)	3-5 October 2017	X
	Workshop on strengthening national capacity for the sustainable development of statistics (Tbilisi, Georgia)	4-6 October 2017	X
	Meeting of the Group of Experts on Measuring Quality of Employment (Geneva, Switzerland)	4-6 October 2017	X
	Meeting of the Task Force on measuring extreme events and disasters (Rome, Italy)	6 October 2017	
	Workshop on statistical data collection (Ottawa, Canada)	10-12 October 2017	X
	National workshop on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (Yerevan, Armenia)	9 October 2017	X
	CES Bureau meeting (Yerevan, Armenia)	10-11 October 2017	
	National workshop on gender statistics (Yerevan, Armenia)	11 October 2017	X
	National workshop on statistics for SDGs (Yerevan, Armenia)	12 October 2017	X
UN Environment	Environment statistics and SDGs - national training workshop (Dushanbe, Tajikistan)	16-18 October 2017	X
EFTA	SPECA Working Group on Statistics (Dushanbe, Tajikistan)	24-26 October 2017	X
	National workshop on the use of administrative sources (Dushanbe, Tajikistan)	27 October 2017	X
Eurostat	Work session on migration statistics (Geneva, Switzerland)	30-31 October 2017	X
	National workshop on modernisation of official statistics (Tashkent, Uzbekistan)	1 November 2017	X
	National workshop on statistics for SDGs (Tashkent, Uzbekistan)	2 November 2017	
CIS-STAT	Workshop on migration statistics (Geneva, Switzerland)	1-2 November 2017	X
UN-GGIM	Workshop on integrating geospatial and statistical standards (Stockholm, Sweden)	6-8 November 2017	
	Workshop on modernization of official statistics (Geneva, Switzerland)	22-23 November 2017	
CIS-STAT	Workshop on gender statistics for EECCA countries (Geneva, Switzerland)	27-28 November 2017	X
	Work session on gender statistics (Belgrade, Serbia)	29 November - 1 December 2017	
UNSD, UN Environment	Workshop on Integrating non-traditional data sources in the production of the SDG indicators (Almaty, Kazakhstan)	28-30 November 2017	X
	Meeting of the Steering Group on statistics for SDGs (Warsaw, Poland)	13-14 December 2017	